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EXPERIENCES


Creating honeymoon product draft for
Best Western Spahotel Casino

Bachelor's Thesis
Tourism

May 2014



DESCRIPTION

	Date of the bachelor's thesis 21 May 2014	
Author(s) Izabella Tkacheva	Degree programme and option Tourism	
Name of the bachelor's thesis Experiences. Creating honeymoon product draft for Best Western Spahotel Casino		
Abstract <p>The main purpose of this thesis is to create the parameters for the draft of a honeymoon product for Russian hotel guests visiting the Best Western Spahotel Casino, a 4Star hotel located in Savonlinna, Finland. The hotel is presently a popular destination among Russians. The addition of a “Honeymoon” product for this hotel is an innovative option. This research work can become a useful and significant tool for raising the hotel rating.</p> <p>Theoretically, it focuses on the meaning of experiences, realms of increasing customer engagement and all elements that play important roles in the goal of attracting more customers in the fields of tourism and hospitality which is the business sphere addressed herein.</p> <p>Special attention has been paid to hospitality product levels, as they are the foundation for building the hotel’s new image – with the anticipated result of increasing its ratings and profits.</p> <p>The practical aspect consists of two parts: 1) conducting and analyzing unstructured interviews, as they will provide the basis for the main outcome; 2) the creation of a draft that encompasses the justification and realization the honeymoon product. To achieve main goal, qualitative method is used.</p> <p>The outcome of my bachelor’s thesis is a draft of honeymoon product that I created for Russian couples who are going to spend their honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino.</p>		
Subject headings, (keywords) Customers’ experiences, experience economy, experience realms, experience engagement, experiential tourism, hospitality product levels, honeymoon product.		
Pages 51 + 3 app.	Language English	URN
Remarks, notes on appendices		
Tutor Eeva Koivula	Employer of the bachelor's thesis Best Western Spahotel Casino	

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1 INTRODUCTION

Today, we live in global community where the availability of goods and services we can purchase is unlimited. With such a broad assortment of everything: here, there and everywhere, creates a complete environment that requires businesses to shed old norms, and offer new and exciting forms of quality goods and perfected services. Nevertheless, customers do not want us to get rid of the traditional values that keep them coming back. They just wish to experience something fresh in place of things that have become boring.

Customers want to remember exciting activities they previously experienced, they want to share their happy moments with each other, they want to keep in mind places where they enjoyed staying and with people whom they liked to communicate. They treasure memorable experiences.

Today, experiences start to play an important role in business sphere because they are in demand and that is why successful entrepreneurs strive to create and stage experiences in their company's offerings. Professional managers know that experiences are social and they impact on how people feel. It is pretty clear that business managers and employees are always interested in how clients feel about goods or services they produced and those who stage such experiences can influence how consumers feel about themselves.

If organizations create and stage experiences that help customers feel pretty good about themselves, customers will definitely feel good about goods and services of those organizations as well and they will come back again and again. Above all, they will return because they will want to get experiences and feel happy. (Empathy in Action: Sustaining Success with Customers 2014.)

Experiences can be staged in many business realms but there are some spheres where they must be created; such as hospitality and tourism industry. Professional experts have been studying this phenomenon during recent years more actively and they acknowledge how it is significant to create experiences in the tourism and hospitality sphere.

As the theme of experiences is actual and popular now, I decided to take experiences as foundation for my bachelor thesis and show how they can be staged in one of the most dynamic industries today: the hospitality industry, and more specifically, in hotels.

The main goal of this thesis is to create a draft of honeymoon product for Russian guests. The “Honeymoon” is special happy period for each couple and it is definitely connected with experiences. As an example of a specific hotel - Best Western Spa-hotel Casino - which is situated in Finland, I tried to show how experience elements can be created to make newly wedded couple feel their best during their honeymoon visit. To achieve this goal, a theoretical framework concerning experiences was considered, and an unstructured interview was conducted and analyzed.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The significance of experiences

In modern world people can find everything they need but it is already not enough to just produce good quality products or suggest perfect services to satisfy people's desires. Today's customers want to get something extraordinary, unusual and unforgettable. That is why, if companies or organizations want to be successful and achieve their goals, they should suggest to clients unique choices that will be different from those customers have purchased in the past. People want to pay their money for diversity and positive emotions that do not leave after the goods or services are gone (Ellis & Rossman 2008).

We all know words «Want, need and necessity». They are motives for everything that we do in our lives. When tough times come and the economy stops functioning so well, needs and desires acquire an entirely different meaning. Thus, main question changes and turns to another form: from what we want we go to what we need. (There is no time like the present to start a new business! 2014.)

2.1.1 Experience economy

No organization wants to give a price reduction on its service or goods; because, if they do, it means that their products or services are no different from their competitors and customers are buying their goods only because of low price. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 1.)

Nowadays, it is no longer enough to just supply our community with goods and services to stimulate economic growth, create new jobs, and maintain economic prosperity. To increase an organization's revenue and reduce unemployment, the staging of experience should be considered as a special form of economic output. Positively, in our modern world where there are too many identical products and services that have no difference from one to another, the only one reasonable decision for value creation is to stage experience. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, IX.)

In this research work, experiences mean: a vivid mark left in people's memory, after having been involved in some events or activities. Experiences are events revealed over duration of time that engage individuals in an inherently personal way (Arsenault & Gale 2004).

Speaking about experiences in economy we find a popular today-term: "experience economy," which describes the business of selling experiences. When this term "experience economy" appeared, people did not know what exactly it meant. Those entrepreneurs, who were not afraid of taking risks and decided to pass on to a new level in economy, made progress in business. The point was not in they were the first discoverers, but they used it right way. The great example is Disneyland, created by Walt Disney as early as 1955. (Arsenault & Gale 2004.)

At the end of twentieth century, a concept "experience economy" started to develop and it acquired supporters from different spheres: such as politics, sociology and the business realm. It was declared that after the monotonous material products of last century that were feeding our communities for so long, we now see that experiences exist and that we can already notice their impact on economic horizon. (Hjorth et al. 2007, 28.)

The term “experience economy” was coined by Joseph Pine and James Gilmore in 1999 in their innovative book titled “The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage.” This book describes experience as a fourth economic offer that is totally different from goods and services. However goods and services are necessary for creating experiences. In that way services can be considered as the stage where experiences are created and goods represent the props that put memorable events in good order. (Arsenault & Gale 2004.)

Generally, economy went through four stages and finally evolved into the experience economy. To understand the most significant differences between four economies, let’s consider “Economic Distinctions” that are represented in the table below extracted from “The Experience Economy” by Pine and Gilmore.

TABLE 1. Economic Distinctions. (Adapted from Pine and Gilmore 2011, 9.)

Economic Distinctions				
Economic Offering	Commodities	Goods	Services	Experiences
Economy	Agrarian	Industrial	Service	Experience
Economic Function	Extract	Make	Deliver	Stage
Nature of Offering	Fungible	Tangible	Intangible	Memorable
Key Attribute	Natural	Standardized	Customized	Personal
Method of Supply	Stored in bulk	Inventoried after production	Delivered on demand	Revealed over a duration
Seller	Trader	Manufacturer	Provider	Stager
Buyer	Market	User	Client	Guest
Factors of Demand	Characteristics	Features	Benefits	Sensations

Each economy –agrarian, industrial, service and experience economy- had its own aspects. The first economy offered commodities as economic offering. According to Pine and Gilmore (2011, 9) commodities are materials extracted from the natural world. After commodities, goods came. Goods are tangible items made and sold by the companies to huge amount of anonymous users who buy them through the internet, off the shelf, out of the magazine, from the lot and so on (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 10-11).

Later, service economy came. Services are intangible activities that are directed at satisfying of concrete clients’ needs. Service economy came when goods were no

longer enough for customers. As a rule, consumers value services more highly than goods which were used to provide the first one. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 12.)

Afterwards, we face the experience economy. This economy is based on giving memorable and personal sensations and impressions to customers by people who create these experiences. The existence of the experience economy does not mean that commodities, goods, and services are no longer produced, on the contrary, they are. The main point is that nowadays clients expect more than just them. (Zaragoza 2009.) Restaurants, for instance, need commodities to cook, and they also need services to sell their food (goods). No doubt it would be better if they add to delicious food and exquisite service some things that can create clients' experience-decoration, music, candles, presentation of dishes, lights.

2.1.2 Experience realms

The experience economy is a new economic level, a transformation which happened due to significant qualitative changes in people's preferences and their desires that always happen when one economy replaces another one. Thus, today we can speak about economic chain with four links. Once, the focus was directed at commodities which later were replaced with goods, then the focus was moved in services and now we are in experience economy. Experiences are what people are attracted with and what they are ready to pay for even if they get goods and services as buying outcome. (Hjorth et al. 2007, 118.)

As a rule, all experiences are connected with emotion engagement regardless customer is passive observer or active participant because according to Hjorth et al. (2007, 156) experiences are short-lived instances and with the help of them an emotional engagement is provided. To understand better types of customers' engagement in experiences, let's consider experience realms by Pine and Gilmore.

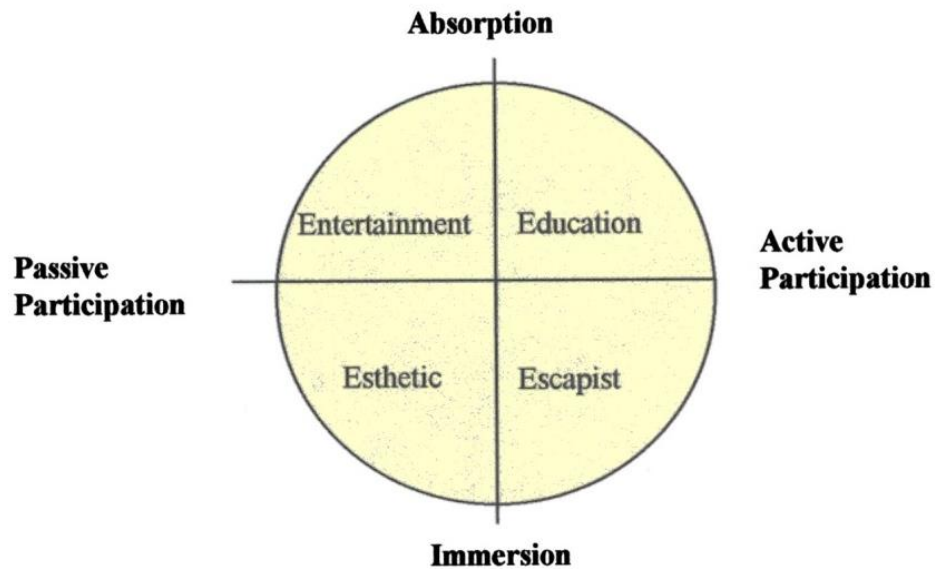


FIGURE 1. Experience realms. (Adapted from Pine and Gilmore 2011, 46.)

The first dimension along the horizontal axis corresponds with extent of an individual's participation in the process. At one end of the axis there is passive participation when guests do not impact directly on the performance or event. For example, a man who is watching a play in the theatre gets experiences as a spectator and listener. At other end of the axis there is active participation when people directly influence on everything that happens at certain moment. An example can be skiers who actively take part in creating their own personal experiences when they conquer Alps. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45.)

The second dimension along vertical axis reflects type of connection or relationship that there are between guests and the performance or event. At one end of the axis there is absorption, it occurs when experiences are transferred in guests' mind and occupy their attention from a distance. At other end of the axis there is immersion, it can be when guest physically or virtually becomes a part of the experience itself. In other words, when experiences go into a guest we are talking about absorption. When a guest goes into experiences, he is immersed in them. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 46.)

Putting one dimension on another one we get four experience realms -entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic (Pine 2011, 47). These realms do not exclude each other, on the contrary, they mix in unbelievable personal experience. So, people can experience mixture of the following realms- escathetic (escapist + esthetic) or enter-

sthetic (entertainment + esthetic) or all experience realms together. What does every realm mean?

The entertainment realm means passive absorption of the experiences through people's senses, for instance you can experience this realm when you listen to music for pleasure or watch a movie. When guests are engaged in the educational realm, they also absorb the experiences but this realm unlike the entertainment realm requires their active participation. In the educational realm individuals should be active participants to gain new knowledge and skills, so educational events engage people's mind or body depending on what kind of education they are focus on-intellectual or physical. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 47-48.)

In contrast to previous two realms the escapist realm characterizes great extent of immersion. In the escapist realm guest is completely immersed in experiences and actively participates in them. In reality this realm is diametrical opposed to the entertainment realm. Instead of being passive observer, guests choose to be real actors who are able to create their own performance. The fourth and the last experience realm is the esthetic. According to this realm an individual is immersed in an event or environment but he has little effect or does not impact on it, he leaves it (not himself!) substantially untouched. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 49-53.)

The richest experiences contain elements of all four realms. If entrepreneurs want to create compelling and bright experiences, they should not restrict their activity with using only one realm. Instead, they need to explore all aspects of each experience realm because with the help of them they can design such experiences which guests want to get. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 59-63.)

2.1.3 Experiential tourism

Creating experiences in organizations, entrepreneurs, businessmen, managers or just employees should always remember three components of key questions: what, for whom and where. Every experience has a theme. The main point is to determine a well-defined theme of the experience. This is because poorly thought-out theme leaves guests nothing, it does not cause any impressions and experiences stop existing in

people' mind. It is necessary to find a suitable theme which should be captivating and compelling for customers. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 67.)

There are five principles that companies should take into account when they develop such a theme (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 65-78):

- Exciting theme should alter a guest's sense of reality
- Themes of the richest experiences completely change perception of time, space and matter
- An engaging theme unites space, time and matter in a logical single whole
- A strong theme divides the available space into several logical completed and connected to each other zones
- A theme should reflect the character of the company which stages experiences.

The theme is a basis of the experience that occurs due to indelible impressions which people get when they engage in experience. Experience is fleeting but impressions remain with people forever. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 78.)

The second key component businessmen should consider is for whom they create the experience. Different customers want different things when they are looking for various experiences. That is why companies should focus on certain category of experiences if they want to be effective and satisfy people's desires. The better companies and organizations know their customers the more specific they can be with their offerings (Davar 2010).

According to Arsenault (2008) creating unforgettable customer experience means understanding clients so well that company knows desires and needs of their clients from the moment they think about travel till the moment they share their exciting stories with family and friends.

Finally, when staggers create experiences they take into consideration a place where they are going to stage experiences. Success of experiences mostly depends on a chosen place which should be liked by people. A special place should entice guests to stay as long as possible. A stage for exciting experience with the help of which entertaining, educational, esthetic and escapist elements make the ordinary place be a special one. It is a great tool that helps to keep experiences in customers' mind for a long time. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 64.)

Experiences can be created in any spheres but there are special spheres without which experiences no longer exist. They are tourism industry and hospitality industry. They are directly connected with each other and experiences that appear in one industry turn into another one. Today we are speaking about experience in tourism. Experiential tourism is a result of global movement that is directed at different methods of learning through direct experiences. Experiential tourism involves travelers in memorable events or activities that are essentially personal and they affect all senses and unite intellectual, emotional and spiritual levels. (Davar 2010.)

The emergence of experiential tourism is also connected with shifting economic value and with transition to new economy- the experience economy. Organizations start to make a focus on experiences leaving beyond goods and services as main offering and using them as tools for staging experiences. In experiential tourism for travelers experiences can include events they take part in, people they meet, food they taste, accommodation where they stay, and points of interest they visit. (Davar 2010.)

Experiential tourism gives people opportunity to immerse in interesting activities and partake in exciting cultural events which help to know more about customs and traditions of local people and country in general. Unlike mass tourism experiential tourism requires deep personal involvement. (Davar 2010.)

Experiential tourism stimulates travelers to take part in experiences. The experiential tourism encompasses all kinds of tourism from nature tourism till adventure tourism and like an umbrella it covers and unites them all. Substantially, experiential travelers look for memorable experiences and as a rule they find them. (Davar 2010.) There are some experiential ingredients which help organizations to create experiences right way to attract more customers. The table below describes every ingredient in detail.

TABLE 2. Twelve Essential Ingredients in Crafting Experiences. (Adapted from Davar 2010.)

Experiential tourism ingredient	The benefit and value
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1. Authentic local people and their stories are at the heart of any well-crafted experience	Authentic, local people provide stories from their experience, real history, and accurate information about local traditions and culture. These people are often seniors in your community, who have a passion for sharing their stories and are credible. Shared stories bring out the magic and the memories of experiences.
2. The experience is supported by positive cues.	Positive cues are things you do to help the experience be congruent with the place where it occurs (in a park, in a picnic shelter). Doing this leaves indelible impressions in the minds of travelers.
3. Multiple interactive methods and tools are used to assist in the learning process	Daily activities or traditions (wood-carving, ranching, glass-blowing) used to create an experience that guests can actually take part in activities - not merely watching a demonstration.
4. Carefully thought out program themes and titles that intrigue visitors are very important.	Travelers are seeking unique themes and uncommon experiences. For example, lighthouse picnics-walking out to have a picnic near Ferryland, Newfoundland, local food and whales.
5. Use of as many of the five senses as possible will lead to better immersion and intensity for the traveler.	It is easy to look and see, it takes more creativity to find innovative and inexpensive ways to incorporate other senses. The more senses, the more memorable, and the more justification for a higher price point. "See, Smell, Hear, Taste, and Touch"
6. Smaller groups provide better enrichment of hands-on learning	Small groups provide better opportunities for stories to be told, more authentic learning to take place, and often involve a higher price point.
7. Experiences involve a shift from dependence on a guide's knowledge, to facilitation by the interpreter or resource specialist so that travelers are more dependent on themselves for their own learning.	As in teaching, this is shift from the framework of an interpreter or resource specialist being "a sage on the stage", to being "a guide on the side". Travelers feel a greater sense of ownership of the experience and have their own authentic stories of learning.

8. Relevant takeaways (memorabilia) are provided during the experience. They are tangible reminders of the experience.	Takeaways increase the value (and therefore price point) of the experience. They become the basis for personal pride and “word of mouth” marketing after the experience.
9. Simple activities, carefully planned, that focus on one or two main activities for travelers to take part in, are best.	Simple activities provide better retention of learning, and they provide more opportunities for travelers to have conversations with the experience provider.
10. Techniques that tap into the different learning styles and multiple intelligences provide for deeper learning and a much more engaged participant.	Howard Gardner’s categories of multiple intelligences includes: visual, kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, intra-personal (reflection), visual-spatial, musical, and naturalistic. Providing different methods for learning create more opportunities for engaged, active travelers.
11. Develop and enhance with WOW aspects- integrate regional foods, a remarkable vista or place, talented storytellers, and interactive learning-together; they have a combined powerful effect.	Increases the overall price point of the experience; intensifies the experience. This type of experience crafting helps to meet the multiple interests, motivations and needs that travelers have. Additional community partners are involved in delivering the entire experience.
12. Personalization or customization of the experience leaves travelers feeling with a feeling of deep appreciation.	Make your tourism experience personal and relevant for each group or visitor that arrives. They appreciate and value attention- to-details and will pay a higher price because of the higher value.

Speaking about experiences that nowadays customers want to get, we should understand how and when experiences appears, what way clients should pass to get experience like outcome. People cannot just immerse or absorb experiences in a moment; first of all they should bring something into experiences. Customers bring their interest, expectations, and willingness with themselves. When guests are immersed in ex-

periences they expect some benefits that they can get after their immersion. It can be good mood, feel of relaxation, new knowledge. With the help of twelve experiential ingredients people are deeply immersed in experience where they learn, entertain, enjoy and escape from reality. (Davar 2010.)

2.2 Peculiarities of hospitality product

As hospitality industry is special industry that cannot be imagined without experiences, it should be given more consideration. Hospitality means “looking after guests well” (Horner & Swarbrooke 1996, 34). Hospitality industry includes hotels, restaurants, cafes, clubs, motels and many others spheres. Let’s take one of the most dynamic spheres where experiences play a paramount role-hotel industry.

Hotels give no longer just beds and food, they strive to bring new things in their service to attract new guests. Service is what exactly differ a good hotel from a memorable one. Today there is no a famous hotel chain that provides only basic service activities, hotels try to create new value on the basis of experiences for its guests. For example, today good hotels promise to give their guests not just beds for a night, they promise the best sleep experience. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, XI.) To create experiences in hotel, it is necessary to take into consideration some peculiarities of this sphere. Thus hotel service has its own seven features (Mullins 1996, 7-8):

1. The guest as a participant in the process. The presence of the customer requires his attention to the hotel environment and characteristics of the service facility. Guests satisfaction are influenced with location, quality service, decoration, atmosphere, furnishing, personnel because these components form service itself that hotel delivers to its guests. Unlike manufacturing where customer cannot influence the process, consumers are inherent part of the process and they can influence on its operations.

2. Simultaneous production and consumption. For instance, when receptionist helps guest, his or her assistance cannot be kept for future use. Hotel services cannot be stored to wait when they will be in requisition. To deliver services to customer, staff should have personal and direct interaction with guests. Services are always created and consumed synchronously.

3. Perishable capacity. As services cannot be kept and used, they are most probably wasted. In contrast to physical product, hotel service is time –perishable. For example, the income lost from unsold hotel room on one day will be lost forever, it cannot be recovered later.
4. Site selection determined by customer demands. As distinct from manufacturing, hotel services cannot move from one place to another, they do not need channel distribution. The consumer and the delivery of hotel service should be brought together. Hotel services cannot be centralized in one location and be distributed for different markets. Experience of hotel services completely depends on personal contact.
5. Labour intensive. Personnel are a main resource in hotel. Organizational hotel effectiveness entirely depends on how staff works. In hotel it is very important to have direct interaction between personnel and guests. The productive work and effective delivery of services to consumers are dependent upon staff's attention and its attitude to hotel guests.
6. Intangibility. Unlike manufacturing, hotel services cannot be touchable and customer cannot inspect the items before purchase but can experience them. The interesting fact is the hotel service cannot be the same for the guest twice. As a rule, hotel services are identified with emotions and feelings left after consumption of the service. The quality of hotel services are usually associated with its general atmosphere, attitudes of personnel, culture, interactions with other guests.
7. Difficulty in measuring performance. It is very difficult to measure concrete output in hotel because there is no a single criterion which can evaluate effective performance. For instance, the number of guests who are staying at hotel in certain period does not allow measuring the quality of service. The intangible nature of hotel services, combined with the heterogeneous nature of clients, means that the real delivery of services will be very different.

2.3 Hospitality product levels

Speaking about hospitality product, there are four product levels which should be taken into consideration when new hospitality product is being created (Kotler et al. 1996, 274-276):

- The core product
- The facilitating product
- The supporting product
- The augmented product

The core product belongs to basis level and represents what customers are really buying. As any product is a set of problem-solving services, customers should decide exactly what they are looking for. (Kotler et al. 1996, 274.) According to Horner & Swarbrooke (1996, 145) the core product has its own benefits and if consumers identify them as personal needs they will buy it. Marketers place special emphasis to the fact that people appreciate the core product benefits more than its features (Kotler et al. 1996, 274).

The second level is the facilitating product. It represents those goods or services whereby the core product can be used by guests. In hotel it can be valet services, restaurants, check-in and check-out services. (Kotler et al. 1996, 275.)

The third level is the supporting product which is additional product offered to increase value to the core product and, as a rule, this product allows to differentiate service from competitors (Kotler et al. 1996, 275-276). For hotel such product can be health spa section or business room facilities that can attract new customers to the hotel.

It is not always understandable where the difference lies between the facilitating product and supporting one because very often the facilitating product for one market segment can be the supporting product for another. (Kotler et al. 1996, 275.) Today in hotel industry their distinction is quite blurry.

According to Kotler, Bowen and Makens (1996, 276) the last level of the hospitality product is the augmented product and it includes accessibility, atmosphere, customer

interaction with the service organization, customer participation and customers' interaction with each other.

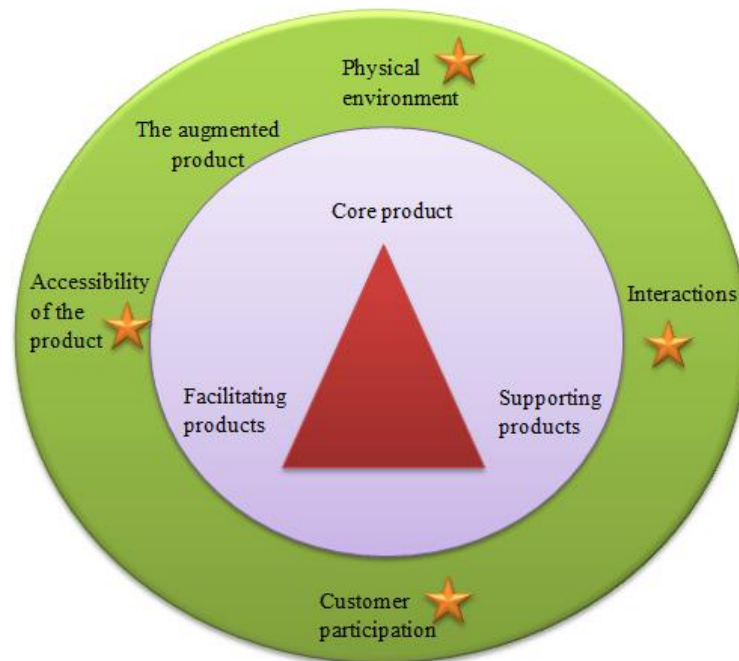


FIGURE 2. Product levels. (Adapted from Kotler et al. 1996, 277.)

The core product serves as a reason why business exists, a special reason for being. The facilitating product is something that helps the core product to reach the target market. The supporting product usually helps to position a product. The first three product levels define what customers receive but they do not determine how they get it. The augmented service offering shows how it can be delivered to customers. That is really important because the delivery of the service impacts on guests' perception of the service. (Kotler et al. 1996, 277.)

Therefore, the interaction of the core product, the facilitating product, the supporting product and augmented product clarifies that customers buy not only product itself, they purchase its benefits such as service elements, after-sales service, brand names. (Horner & Swarbrooke 1996, 144-147.)

2.4 The meaning of honeymoon

Today the experience economy plays a great role in people's life. Our life consists of our remembrances, and the more positive recollections we have, the happier we are. That's why it is really important for companies, if we are talking about experience realm, to form only positive impressions, satisfy people's needs and realize their desires to attract new guests and make constant clients come back again. In my bachelor's thesis I decided to consider honeymoon as a memorable event in every couple's life that is definitely connected with some kind of experiences. Honeymoon is a special first vacation for couple that immediately follows after the marriage celebrations (Honeymoon 2014).

Honeymoon period gives the couple an excellent chance to spend happy time together and understand one another much better. It gives them an opportunity to relax and recharge themselves after their exciting but sometimes stressful wedding ceremonies (History of Honeymoon 2014).

The term honeymoon is packed with symbolism. As honey is tasty and sweet, it symbolizes sweetness in relationship between the bride and the groom specifically in their first month. As a rule, there are no any stress situations or intense moments of ordinary life in the beginning of the couple's relationship. The moon symbolizes the phases of their relationship as it waxes and wanes from full moon to full moon. Like the moon, the newly wedded couple's relationship has its darker moments and its brilliant moments. (Honeymoon 2014.)

For the first time honeymoon as a concept was talked about in West and after this concept was spread worldwide. Nowadays celebrating honeymoon after marriage ceremony is a common tradition in all countries. A lot of people love celebrating this event but all of them prefer different destinations: some people choose to go abroad in exotic places, other part likes domestic locations. There are people who spend their honeymoon on cruise ships. The couple can choose any place they like for their important event but the main point of honeymoon is always the same. (History of Honeymoon 2014.)

The meaning of honeymoon in different countries can vary from one destination to another; in particular a great difference in traditions can be noticed if we look into earliest days. For instance, in Ancient Greece before the couple was invited to come in, they had to eat honey. Russia as well has its own honeymoon tradition. For Russian newlyweds, honeymoon is a tradition which continues wedding celebration but now only for couple. For a long time, in Russia during the wedding celebration, newly wedded couple was given special present-a barrel (about 10 kilograms) with honey which is supposed to eat for a month. That is why for Russians it is called honeymoon, it is literally, not metaphorically associated with honey. (Medovyi mesyats, yego istoriya (Honeymoon, its history) 2014.)

Thus, honeymoon in different countries has different meanings but all of them are definitely connected with experience. In my bachelor's thesis honeymoon means a special newly wedded couple's holiday which follows after marriage ceremony.

3 COMMISSIONER OF THESIS

For my research work I have chosen Best Western Spahotel Casino where I have had a practice since December. Depending on department I work as a receptionist at the reception desk, a waiter in restaurant and as an assistant in spa sector. Therefore I can learn all working processes from within.

During my work in the hotel I have already communicated with employees and employer, I have spoken with guests and as it turned out it was really productive for gaining new knowledge related to this sphere-hotel industry. I can say that Best Western Spahotel Casino is a good four star hotel with its own history and every year it becomes more popular especially among Russian tourists.

3.1 Profile of Best Western Spahotel Casino

Today, the worlds' largest and one of the fastest growing hotel chain, Best Western, includes about 4200 hotels in over 110 countries. Best Western has its own slogan which is well-known from all over the world; it is "the world's largest hotel family." In contrast to other famous chains which are usually a mixture of many units: those

which the company owns and those which are under franchise deal, each Best Western hotel is an independently owned and operated franchise. (Best Western 2014.)

Best Western is a special model of quality. Hotel brand Best Western is a pattern of one of the most successful enterprises in the hotel industry. Best Western hotel chain started its operation in the years following World War II and was founded by M.K. Guertin even in 1946. (Best Western 2014.)

In spite of the fact that hotels have to use Best Western signage and identify themselves as a Best Western hotel, they are given a special choice of using their own independent name as part of their identity (Best Western International 2014.) For example, Best Western Spahotel Casino I am focused on.

A hotelier has an opportunity to use his right to determine the hotel policy, from design to the tip size. This allows individual hotels to keep a unique atmosphere. Consequently, hotels of Best Western chain, as a rule, have their own appearance in contrast to other hotel chains, which demand unified appearance all their hotels. (Best Western Hotels 2014.)

Having got acquainted with Best Western chain, now it is time to know more about Best Western Spahotel Casino. Best Western Spahotel Casino is situated in the heart of Savonlinna on a private island on Lake Saimaa. This hotel is 1 km from central Savonlinna. The main hotel works year round and has 84 rooms, in addition, summer hotels Vuorilinna and Malakias open their doors in the summer season. The most important and popular sight- the 15th-century Olavinlinna Castle is 1.5 km away. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014a.)

Spahotel Casino offers great assortment of such things as swimming pools, jacuzzi, gym and saunas for its guest. Besides, Spahotel Casino can boast many activities such as billiards, cycling, fitness centre, wellness centre, beachfront, bicycle rental, children's playground and others. Best Western Spahotel Casino suggests five types of room. They are Standard, Superior, Superior plus, Family room and Suite. Every room has a balcony which allows enjoying picturesque Lake view. Besides all rooms at Best Western Spahotel Casino have new furnishings and a modern flat-screen TV with cable channels. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014b.)

Restaurants in Spahotel Casino serve both Scandinavian cuisine and international dishes, often using local ingredients. There are three restaurants in the hotel, one of them has a summertime terrace with lake views, where breakfast can also be enjoyed. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014a.)

Besides the hotel offers different facilities, for example they are WiFi, it is available in all areas, and private parking. Both are free of charge. In addition people can use the following options: 24-hour front desk, meeting/banquet facilities, airport shuttle (surcharge), laundry, gift shop, luggage storage, fax/photocopying, business center. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014b.)

As for beauty and health services, there are many treatments which help everybody to have a rest and be in harmony with himself. For guests it is suggested massage, zonal therapy, stone therapy, magnet stimulation, Indian head massage. Everyone can book massages or spa therapy sessions in the spa and wellness centre. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014a.)

To sum up, surrounded by pure nature and clear fresh water of Lake Saimaa, Best Western Spahotel Casino offers a warm welcome. It provides accommodation, restaurant and spa services together with congress room possibilities. People can refresh themselves in the spa area; enjoy different pleasant treatments, delicious cuisine and good service. (Best Western Spahotel Casino 2014a.)

4 METHODOLOGY

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are effective but there are some differences that should be taken into consideration by a researcher when he chooses a suitable method for his research. Quantitative method is a rational research method and it is based on data approach that provides a measure of what everyone thinks from a numerical and statistical point of view. Quantitative research collects a large amount of data which can be easily organized and presented in reports for analysis. (Qualitative and Quantitative Research 2014a.)

Quantitative research greatly uses the following methods: surveys and questionnaires with determined questions and answers where respondents can tick from a certain selection. Answers can be measured with the help of numbers such as scales out of 10 or using feelings scale such as "strongly agree" or "disagree". This research form is very flexible and simple in using and can be carried out through the post, online or even over the phone. A researcher should make sure that he has a fair cross section of respondents and that he has enough of them to provide a significant range of reliable data. (Qualitative and Quantitative Research 2014a.)

In contrast to quantitative research methods that rely on numbers and data, qualitative research is more concentrated on how people feel and why they make certain choices. Qualitative research is considerably connected with discussion around special concepts or ideas with open questions. Interviewees are encouraged to explain their reasons why they choose exactly certain answers that can reveal underlying associations, motivations and behavioral triggers. The most common form of qualitative research is face to face interviews. (Qualitative and Quantitative Research 2014a.)

Qualitative Research consists of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data by observing what people say and do. While quantitative research is focused on measuring of things, qualitative research is directed to learning the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols. Qualitative research is more subjective than quantitative research and the nature of this research type is open-ended and exploratory. In qualitative research respondents need to answer general questions and the interviewer explores their responses to identify interviewees' opinions and feelings about a discussed topic and to determine the degree of agreement among group members. (Qualitative and Quantitative research 2014b.)

The decision according these two methods is not so easy to take and sometimes has a philosophical meaning. Which method to choose a quantitative or a qualitative will depend on the nature of the project, the type of information and the availability of resources such as money, time, human that will be needed during a research. (Qualitative and Quantitative research 2014b.)

Quantitative research includes different methods such as case studies, survey, experiment. Nevertheless, surveys are the primary method of quantitative research. There

are four basic survey types. They are mail survey, telephone survey, online survey and in- person survey method. Moreover, there are also “hybrid” techniques. Mail surveys keep respondents' anonymity and that is why they are best for the collection of confidential information. They provide the best chances for both random samples and targeted random samples. Mail surveys are the cheapest way to collect data from large numbers of people. (Quantitative Research Considerations 2014.)

Telephone surveys can be conducted both by trained interviewers and by automated systems. Data accumulated through telephone surveys often does not have significant missing, originally because it suggests the chance for personal assistance. New automated casual dialing systems enlarge the “randomness of the sample,” though only respondents with telephones are included in the sample. Telephone surveys suggest a great opportunity to reach “low rate” respondents – population of people who are very few in the general population. Due to them data collection is not such long process. Besides, new IVR (Interactive Voice Response) gives researchers an opportunity to branch – ask respondents some questions based on previous answers – and otherwise customize the survey. (Quantitative Research Considerations 2014.)

Surveys can also be conducted by computers and the Internet. Online survey is the fastest method in data collecting and reporting and not expensive at all. Moreover, they suggest technical advantages, for instance, a control of order bias. The most convenient type of online survey is the Disk by Mail (DBM) survey. It is self-administered survey with respondents who were recruited before. The weakness of online surveys is the limited sampling. Only those respondents can answer quickly who have access to computers all day. (Quantitative Research Considerations 2014.)

Hybrid Method is special combination of different methods with additional technologies that can help a researcher to get more responses quickly. The most common hybrid method is Telephone – Mail – Telephone (TMT) where a researcher recruit, screen, instruct people by phone and after send them a survey by mail. Respondents can phone an interviewer or send questionnaire back by mail. (Quantitative Research Considerations 2014.)

Qualitative research includes also many methods but the most common of them are participant observation, direct observation, unstructured interviewing and case studies.

Participant observation requires the researcher to become a participant in the context being observed. Participant observation shows how to enter the context, the role of the researcher as a participant, the collection and storage of field notes, and the analysis of field data. Participant observation usually requires months of hard work because the researcher has to become like a natural part of the culture in order to assure that the observations are of the natural phenomenon. (Qualitative Methods 2014.)

Direct observation differs from participant observation in some ways. Firstly, a direct observer does not strive to become a participant in the context and he tries to be unobtrusive so as not to influence on the observations. Secondly, direct observation offers a more detached aspect as the researcher is watching rather than taking part. Therefore, technology can be a useful element of direct observation. For example, the researcher can videotape the phenomenon or watch from behind one-way mirrors. Thirdly, direct observation, as a rule, is more focused than participant observation. The researcher is observing certain situations or people rather than trying to immerse in the entire context. Fourthly, direct observation does not take as long as participant observation. (Qualitative Methods 2014.)

Unstructured interviewing has its own features that are different from traditional structured interviewing. Firstly, in spite of the fact that researcher has some fundamental key concepts and main questions which he is going to ask about, he does not use formal structured document or protocol like in traditional interview. Secondly, there is always a chance for the interviewer to direct the conversation at more interesting way or change the subject whenever time is running out but more important aspects have not been discussed yet. Therefore, unstructured interviewing is really helpful if researcher wants to explore his topic broadly. (Qualitative Methods 2014.)

As a rule, unstructured interviewing is informal conversation and its main aim is to help interviewees to express themselves in their own way and turn them to honest talk. The key to successful unstructured interviews is to explore productively and effectively. That means that the researcher should make respondents tell him as much appropriate information as they can. (Interviews 2014.)

A case study is an intensive study of a specific individual or context. For instance, Freud developed case studies of several persons as the basis for the theory of psycho-

analysis and Piaget did case studies of children to study developmental phases. The main point is that the researcher has to use more than one way for conducting a case study and that is why often special combination of methods is used, for example, unstructured interviewing and direct observation can be applied together. (Qualitative Methods 2014.)

5 IMPLEMENTATION

For my bachelor's thesis I chose one of qualitative research methods - unstructured interviewing. I decided that this method would be more appropriate for my research because it allows having face-to-face contact during the conversation between the researcher and respondents.

Besides, I decided not to use survey methods because I had a personal contact with hotel guests and I could conduct interview directly in hotel without using mail or phone for getting through to interviewees. Thus, I interviewed 50 hotel guests who were staying in Best Western Spahotel Casino during Russian holidays- Women's Day from 7th to 10th of March. During this period in Savonlinna there were many Russian guests.

I mostly interviewed Russian couples and asked them about what they would like to get in their possible honeymoon if they preferred to spend their special celebration in Best Western Spahotel Casino in Savonlinna. Besides, I also asked individuals: single man and woman about their preferences because they are potential customer in future and they can give some good advice. The main point is that I focused on certain target group - Russians from 25 till 44 years old, as my goal was to design a draft of honeymoon product for Russian couples in this age category.

The main benefit of this method is an interviewer can get concrete and specific answers pretty quickly without any earnest analysis. An interviewer and respondents have psychological interaction and if someone has some problems with understanding the question, an interviewer can make it clearer.

As for my purpose of using qualitative method, I can say that unstructured interviewing was pretty effective because speaking to guests I could determine advantages and disadvantages of hotel atmosphere and what they wanted to get in their honeymoon product. Indeed, guests are true witnesses of all that happen in a hotel every day and sometimes they can notice something important that top managers for so long haven't paid attention to.

For the interview I prepared special questions in written form which were necessary for my research work and when guests came to reception desk I gave them questionnaire list if they had free time and desire to share their thoughts and ideas. Guests did not have to write anything, they just needed to read question and after taking a little time to think, answer it. During our unstructured interviewing I was writing all guests' answers in notebook, so hotel guests could see them. I asked them some questions that were connected with experience in the hotel and honeymoon product.

I think that with the help of this method, I could find out more about amateurish customers' opinion and understand more clearly what they thought about experience in general and what they included in the meaning of hotel experience in more detail. Not everyone wanted to have an interview. Therefore, those who rejected to answer the questions, I just said: "That's ok, maybe next time. Have a nice day!" The main point was that it was not formal conversation; it was informal talk with those who wanted to share their ideas and express their opinion.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Interview

Having analyzed all guests' answers which respondents gave me during the unstructured interview (appendix 1), I got the following situation concerning my research work. Below I present the results.

1. Speaking about experience in general, the guests can be divided into two groups. The first group included those who presented experience as a result of any activity they somehow had been involved in. In which connection it did not matter for them whether they were passive or active participants, they got experiences anyway.

The second group said that experience was something that was connected with emotions. They were talking about both positive emotions and negative ones which they could feel when they were occupied by experience.

Nevertheless, there were people who imagined experience as something bright and memorable after active participation in some event and they connected experience with adventures especially risky adventures where you splashed out energy and got positive emotions and because of them you remembered your experience.

As for hotel experience, guests' answers pleasantly surprised me when almost all clients told me that experience and hotel industry were directly connected with each other and it was really significant to create experiences in that sphere where they played a paramount role.

Everyone emphasized that in hotel, staff played the most important role and the experience you got there was mostly related to employees. They insisted that guests' attitude to the hotel in many cases depended on how personnel treated them while they were staying at the hotel. Guests mentioned that they always remembered place where there were people they liked to communicate with.

Everyone shared the opinion that the waiter's smile and good appearance and a neat uniform of a lady at the reception desk, who usually wished you good day, left only great impression. Even if some misunderstandings occurred, professional staff could sort it out without taking much time.

2. In figure 3 you can see answers to the question about what people pay attention to in the first place when they settle down in hotel on arrival. Reception was the first popular answer among guests when they were speaking about it. Mentioning front desk –reception, interviewees had in mind staff's professionalism and as reception was the face of the hotel, receptionists should have special skills and knowledge and necessary personal traits such as responsibility, sociability, attentiveness, friendliness, knowledge of foreign languages. The second popular answer was atmosphere and the third one was restaurant food.

What do you pay attention on in the first place when you come in hotel?

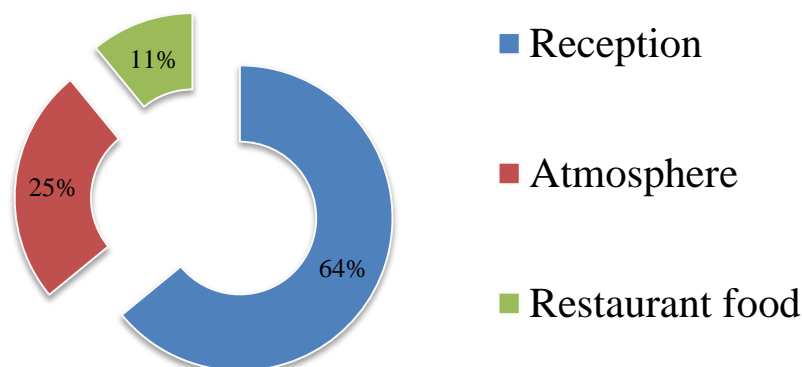


FIGURE 3. Respondents' answers during unstructured interview

By the way, guests said that they were really happy when on reception there were Russian speakers. For many of them it was a pleasant surprise because not everyone spoke English very well or knew Finnish. Besides, there were enough Russians who were willingly practicing their Finnish language. And that fact already was pleasant for Finnish employees.

3. In figure 4 you can find the results concerning how many customers wanted to celebrate their honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino. Many interviewees said that they wanted to celebrate it there because of pleasant atmosphere that was in hotel. By pleasant atmosphere, guests meant polite and qualified staff, exquisite service in the restaurant where every day there was delicious food, up-to-date facilities and other things that made guests' staying at the hotel better.

Those, who answered “yes” to the question “would you like to spend your honeymoon in Spahotel Casino”, said that Spahotel Casino was small agreeable and cozy hotel where there were a lot of things to do: from comfortable gym to perfect spa sector.

Those people, who answered “no”, explained that the point was not in the hotel itself, but they just would like to spend their honeymoon in such warm and famous places as the Maldives, Thailand, Jamaica, Bora Bora, Bali or Sydney.

Would you like to celebrate your honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino?

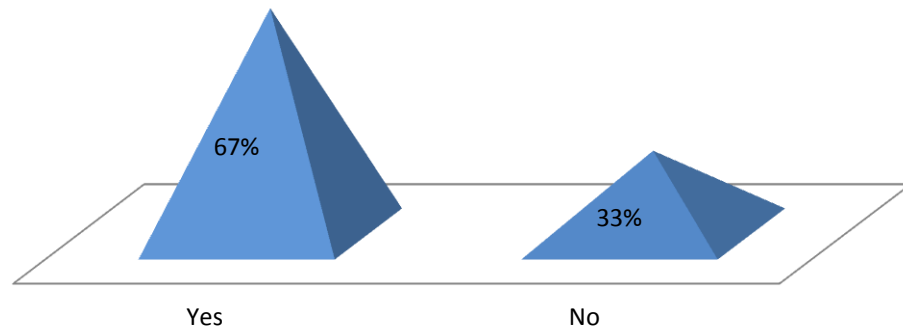


FIGURE 4. Respondents' answers during unstructured interview

4. Moreover, when I asked a question about Savonlinna as a place for honeymoon, everybody told me only good things about that beautiful place in Finland. Guests shared their emotions with me and expressed their points of view concerning Finnish Venice - Savonlinna.

Some of guests admired nature and beauty of this place - wonderful landscapes, fresh air, pure lake water and virgin forests. Others added that honeymoon was special time only for lovers where they could enjoy their time spent together, where nobody and nothing would distract them from their special period of life. Other people agreed that such unique, amazing and marvelous place as Savonlinna was more appropriate for spending honeymoon than for anything else.

5. In figure 5 you can see some popular reasons why people chose Spahotel Casino. As I interviewed Russian guests, and some of them stayed in Best Western Spahotel more than once, the question was "why do you choose exactly Best Western Spahotel Casino as a hotel for staying". The answers varied from one guest to another.

Why do you choose Best Western Spahotel Casino?

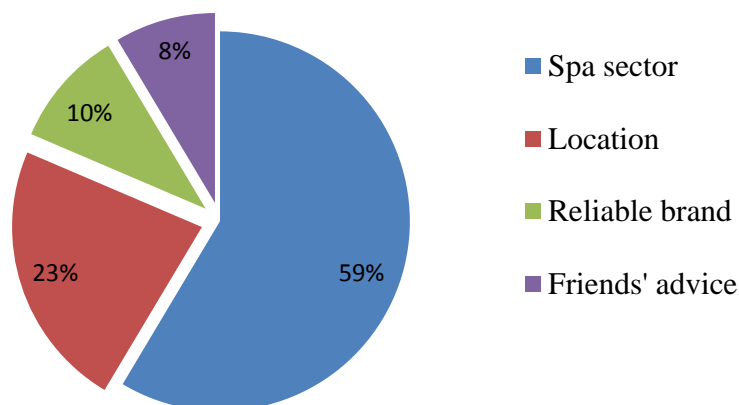


FIGURE 5. Respondents' answers during unstructured interview

The overwhelming majority answered that they had chosen Best Western because of its great spa sector. They said that for such a small hotel, it had everything guests wanted: adult and children swimming pools, jacuzzi, hammam and finnish sauna. However, some guests complained about lack of Russian banya (sauna). Most likely it was a joke but they continued to insist on building Russian banya if Spahotel Casino was oriented on Russian clients.

Others said that they were attracted by Spahotel Casino due to its location. They told me that the good point was not only that it was situated in beautiful Savonlinna but that it was also located near the centre of town on the picturesque island. This fact allows the hotel to be a calm place and at the same moment you could get any points of interest.

Among interviewees there were some guests who made a decision consciously concerning Best Western Spahotel Casino because of its famous and reliable brand-Best Western. As it turned out many people know that Best Western is a pattern of quality and good service. Those, who noted this element, were in many hotels by Best Western brand in different countries such as Spain, The United States of America, Canada, France and others. The last small group said that their friends advised them to use service of Best Western Spahotel Casino and they decided to make use of their advice.

6. When I asked about disadvantages in the hotel that guests maybe noticed, guests did not claim pretty much, just some of them mentioned that they had to wait for some time while their room was being cleaned up before they could check in. Other clients noted practical part's defects of working process, such as: sometimes a maid did not bring soap in time and they needed to go to the reception desk several times. The last claim was about the lack of materials about hotel, points of interest and Savonlinna news in Russian language.

7. When I asked a question about "how long would you like to spend your honeymoon in Savonlinna and specifically in Best Western Spahotel Casino", all guests' answers ranged from 4-6 days. All guests would like to celebrate their honeymoon in several places. At least they were talking about four beautiful and romantic ones for their special event if they choose Finland. Everyone said that he wished to experience something new and unusual from one destination to another and, therefore, they were not going to stay only at one place.

8. Regarding the amenities that newlyweds would like to get on their honeymoon, guests answered that they would mostly like to experience tranquility which the hotel could organize for them. Besides, everyone mentioned rich nature that should surround the place where newly married couple would stay. Guests agreed that it was an important part of a happy honeymoon. Some interviewees were talking about perfect hotel service which helped to make the honeymoon more comfortable.

9. In figure 6 you can see people's answers to the question about what guests wanted the hotel to include in honeymoon product. In answer to this question guests could include all elements they wished to get and express their own point of view. The guests' opinions were at odds with each other.

What would you like the hotel to include in the honeymoon product?

- Spa services
- Romantic candlelit dinner
- Honeymoon cake, bottle of wine on arrival
- Romanic exursion to Olavinlinna Castle
- Memory gift from hotel
- Boat cruise on lake

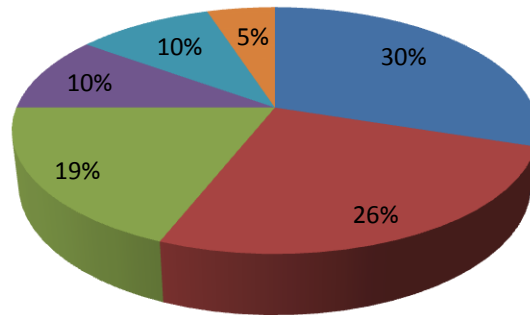


FIGURE 6. Respondents' answers during unstructured interview

Many guests preferred to get as many spa services as possible during their honeymoon. They said that all spa procedures helped to relax and feel better and when you were in harmony with yourself, your holiday seemed to you even better.

Others chose romantic candlelit dinner in traditional style where a pleasant atmosphere would be created for a couple. They said that it was a traditional aspect of romantic dinner; candles were still a very pleasant element for lovers.

Two other groups were not so big and they wished to get a memory gift from the hotel and a romantic excursion to Olavinlinna Castle. The first wish was to remember the great time that the happy couple had in the hotel, and due to an excursion, they could know more about that unique place of beauty.

Moreover, there were several guests who wanted to include boat cruise on the lake in their honeymoon product. They confirmed that it would be great to get such experience where you could enjoy beautiful landscapes and pure nature around you, it would definitely create magic atmosphere and make newly married couple's mood high.

10. In figure 7 you can see a common answer to the question about taking photos during the honeymoon. It was quite obvious that everyone answered positively and they

would like to get them after their honeymoon. Guests compared photos to additional memory that lived forever. Many respondents said that photos always reminded them about their vivid live moments. They were speaking about how it was significant for couples to have good photos from such memorable event in their life which could always remind them about their happy time.

Would you like the professional photographer to take photos or make a video about your honeymoon?

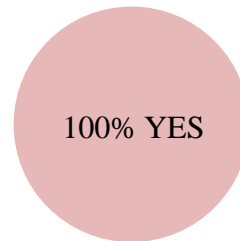


FIGURE 7. Respondents' answers during unstructured interview

6.2 The draft of honeymoon product

During the analysis, all answers were taken into account and according to them, the draft of honeymoon product was developed.

The draft of Honeymoon Product for Best Western Spahotel Casino:

- 4 – nights accommodation in Superior plus/Suit hotel room
- Delicious daily breakfast buffet in the restaurant Ravintola
- 3x romantic dinner for two in restaurant Amanda
- 1x crayfish dinner for two in couple's room
- Honeymoon cake, fruit platter + bottle of wine in room on arrival
- Spa sector (saunas, swimming pools and jacuzzi) and gym
- 2x individual treatments for two for choice:
 - ❖ Hot Stone Massage - 60 min.
 - ❖ Massage with hot treatment -30 min.
 - ❖ Facial massage -30 min.
 - ❖ Indian Head massage- 45 min.
 - ❖ Feet massage - 45min.
- Memorable gift from the hotel

- Romantic excursion to Olavinlinna castle
- Lovely 1.5-hour boat cruise on lake Saimaa
- Professional honeymoon photographs

To be like a place of experience where people want to come back, it is necessary to create pleasant atmosphere where guests perceive colors of reality that they are in for a moment. If a hotel wants to be successful and achieve good results- bright image and catchy brand, always fully booked, maximizing profit - it should surprise its clients every time from their arrival till their departure, from doorman's smile on the first day to his words "see you soon and welcome again".

It is always pleasant to know that someone takes care of you when you are travelling. You can just enjoy your trip without worrying about any details because everything is already under control by professionals, especially in such important time as honeymoon. Using the example of Best Western Spahotel Casino, let's consider how it is possible to create experiences in hospitality industry and what services honeymoon product for newly married Russian couple includes.

On newly wedded couple's arrival

When the newlyweds come to Best Western Spahotel Casino, they will be welcomed by amiable receptionists because reception desk is on the first floor near the entrance. While new guests are being checked in, one of hotel's employees will give a rose to a lady and tell her something pleasant, for example, "this majestic rose is for a beautiful Madam or Missis". This is a great marketing ploy which hotels can apply to make a great first impression.

In that way first impression will be already positive and will form certain attitude to the hotel. Russians appreciate beauty and special attention very much, and even something will be missing they will not notice because their attention will be directed to a fragrant rose and its smell will form good emotions. As we know there is no second chance to make a first impression. Hospitality employees know this fact very well and try not to lose sight of it.

The main issue is check-in of newlyweds. It should be done fast and they should not stand in line. This condition will allow couple to feel superiority. That is an important

thing because Russians do not like to wait long, it annoys them and it can spoil their experiences.

After getting room keys, it is time to go to the room. While professional receptionist is escorting a newly married couple to their room, she or he will be telling them many pleasant things concerning their arrival and explaining everything that the couple can use and do in the hotel and generally in town.

Approaching their hotel room, the couple will certainly notice that a red carpet from the reception place leads to their suite. That is one more special way for the hotel to make a good impression and in hotel industry it works one hundred percent. A newly wedded couple can feel like they are special guests such as celebrities-superstars at the Academy Awards Presentations. Russians like to be in the centre of attention, so it is definitely a pleasant surprise for them. The receptionist will tell newly wedded couple that they are special customers, wish them good day and leave them alone.

Honeymooners' room or step on the road to fairy-tale

In the room, the bride and groom will find natural flowers, a bottle of wine and fruit platter on the table. These presents mean care and attention from the management of the hotel. The happy couple sees that at the most important period of their life, everybody wishes them happiness and good luck.

Moreover, on thin and light curtains there will be inscription which is made of rose-petals and it is about "Your honeymoon will be the best". The curtains are made of very thin material on purpose, so that the newly wedded couple can always have a chance to enjoy a beautiful Lake view from their window.

As for the couple's bed, it will be covered with a sheet in form of hearts that symbolize the couple like a single-whole, two hearts that will forever beat together. A surprise will be already waiting for the newly married couple under their pillows which they will find at night. It will be a magic prediction written on small scroll made of a linen cloth. The idea is to create a unique atmosphere of a fairy-tale for special guests. Every night before the couple falls asleep, they will find different exciting predictions for next day. Russians love everything unusual and they are obsessed with things

which take time to unravel. So, this innovative way for making a surprise will definitely work with Russian guests.

Besides, everyday there will be famous Russian poem on the table that is also a big surprise for newly married couple. Russians love poems and they remember the most well-known of them long time after their school time. Therefore, it will be very nice for them to remember classics and immerse in romantic atmosphere.

A pleasant atmosphere while eating

As for daily breakfast, for newly married couple it will be served in the main restaurant in Spahotel Casino- Ravintola (that means just restaurant in Finnish). Every morning from 8.00 till 10.30 the best view table will be reserved for the couple. On the table there will be always fresh flowers in the vase which will create fresh atmosphere.

When the couple comes to the restaurant they will find their table at once. The table, which will be prepared for them, stands out among other tables. Only on the couple's table there will be table wares. Besides, the table will be covered with a white cotton table-cloth where it is drawn Olavilinna Castle and it is written "The best honeymoon ever". All these things are the best reminders of one of the happiest days in the couple's life. Usually breakfast is held in the form of a buffet where guests choose from the offered assortment what they want to. All dishes in Spahotel Casino are tasty and fresh.

Best Western Spahotel Casino can also boast its delicious dinners which are made by a professional cook every day. The couple can enjoy culinary masterpieces whenever they feel hungry from 14.00 to 21.00. The wonderful place where dinners will be served is called Amanda. It is a restaurant with a stunning Lake view which is a little bit different from one that guests can enjoy in the morning in Ravintola. Captivating view is not only one point that has its own peculiarities.

In the restaurant Amanda guests choose dishes from a la carte menu and make their own order directly to a waiter. For dinner, newly wedded couple again will have some privileges which involve honeymoon guests in romantic world. First of all, fragrant

flowers and aromatic candles will be put on the light pink table-cloth. Pink color symbolizes happiness, lovers' tenderness to each other and a little naivety which are always between lovers. Secondly, during their dinner the lights will be slightly turned down and candles on the table will be lit. Thirdly, quiet music will be turned on as accompaniment to this fabulous moment. Couple's experiences during their dinner will be always bright and colorful.

In honeymoon product crayfish dinner is also included. They say that the most delicious crayfish dishes can be tasted only in Finland because Finns know some special secret of how crayfish should be cooked. This fact is well known for everybody all over the world. As a result of this, honeymoon guests will also be happy to taste one of the delicious crayfish dishes. It will be special crayfish dinner for newly married couple that will be served in their room. Candles, flowers, tableware are like in the restaurant but only for the couple. This allows lovers to enjoy their time spend together.

On the first day of the couple's arrival they will be given fruit platter, a bottle of wine and a honeymoon cake. If fruits and wine are already in the room by moment when newly wedded couple comes, honeymoon cake will be served in the evening of arrival day. The first day is as important as last day of staying because how exactly hotel welcomes its guests forms their experiences concerning the hotel.

Spa and Wellness Center is where relaxation and recovery meet

Other pleasant surprise that Best Western Spahotel Casino organizes for the newly married couple will be in the Spa sector. The couple can use it all their honeymoon days whenever they want. Nevertheless, it seems that no one can guarantee that other guests will not swim there at the same time as they will. Therefore, the hotel finds way out. For the bride and the room all four days a reservation will be made for 2 hours in spa sector where nobody except them can come. A good hotel understands the couple's romantic period and respects their valuable time spent together. Thus, even spa sector can be a romantic place if employees know how to organize it and if they want to give their guests pleasure for a while. Best Western Spahotel Casino knows how to make people happy.

On the second day for couple the hotel offers morning procedure such as swimming in the pool and saunas from 10.30 till 12.00. Reservation time of next three days should be coordinated with receptionists if newly married couple wants to be alone in spa sector for a while.

When newly married couple comes in swimming pool department, they will be amazed with what they will see. Along the border of swimming pool there will be red and white rose petals and quiet music will play like from nowhere. This entire pleasant atmosphere creates a feeling of perfection like nothing and never was better till this moment. The only one person who will be with newly wedded couple in spa sector is bartender in case of newly married couple will want something from the bar. A bartender will not prevent them, they even will not see him, but at the same time if they need something he will be there waiting for asking “would you like something special”?

In the draft of honeymoon product I also included refreshing treatments mostly those that are connected with different kinds of massages. I decided to include them because they are very popular among guests and when I was working in the hotel, guests wanted to enjoy them in spa-center. Such massage treatments as hot stone massage, massage with hot treatment, facial massage, Indian head massage and feet massage were in requisition to a greater extent. Russians love refreshing procedures that make them feel healthy and where they can relax.

Newly wedded couple will be pleasantly surprised when they get a chance to enjoy them during their honeymoon. In the health and beauty department, the couple will be under relaxation effect of all things that causes positive emotions and are based on pleasant impressions. It is not just perfect massage which will be given by professional masseur. It is about additional things that involve guests in the world of experiences, they are aromatic oils, quiet relaxing music, baskets with flowers.

Massage is accompanied with a feeling of satisfaction and sense of harmony. Long time after any kind of massages, honeymoon guests will be in emotionally balanced state. They will not pay attention to external factors' impact that can evoke anxiety or arouse mental stress. On the contrary, they will feel confidence and emotional emancipation which just help them to strengthen their relationship.

A romantic excursion to Olavinlinna Castle

The hotel organizes for newly married couple a romantic excursion to Olavinlinna Castle. This excursion will be on the second day of the couple's arrival and start at 12.30 in Castle. By 12.00 a white limousine will have come to take guests and get them to Olavinlinna. The way to the Castle impregnates with experience as well. A driver will wear a special medieval costume that already speaks about time where soon honeymoon guests should be immersed in. He will open car's doors and welcome newly wedded couple; he will ask them about their honeymoon. His attentiveness will form pleasant experiences and the couple will realize on subconscious level that everyone takes care of them and strive to make their honeymoon better.

When they get to Olavinlinna Castle, the first man who will meet them is a guide who also wears fifteen century clothes. He will tell them history of this place from the beginning, placing emphasis to relationship between two countries - Sweden and Russia. Before newly wedded couple come inside of the Castle, the guide will tell them "Welcome under the protection of stone walls!"

Olavinlinna is a 15th-century three-tower castle located in Savonlinna which was founded by Erik Axelsson Tott in 1475 (Savonlinna through history 2014). In the Middle Ages Olavinlinna was a special place of protection of strategically important Savo region that belonged to Sweden (Olavinlinna Castle 2014).

Nowadays it has another function and today Olavinlinna Castle is very popular sights in Finland. Very often it hosts weddings, concerts and theatrical performances. In summer, every year it attracts opera singers from all over the world at the Savonlinna Opera Festival. This festival is the most famous cultural international event in whole Finland. Opera festival in Savonlinna is a visiting card on tourism world map. Russia is very close to Finland, so Russians know a lot of things about this country and of course they heard about Olavinlinna Castle. Therefore, for Russian newly married couple it will be interesting to visit one of magic Finnish sights.

For the couple it will be organized a special excursion which includes a visiting of the nobility' rooms, towers, prison cells in the dungeon and the Knights' Hall decorated with a statue of St. Olaf. After observing whole Olavinlinna Castle, honeymoon guests

will be suggested a light dinner which is served in courtyard. They can taste Scandinavian traditional drink – Glögi and traditional Finnish dish – Lörtsy with any fillings they like-meat, fish, vegetables or jam. Besides, they can try on medieval costumes if they wish to immerse more deeply in the past. This excursion allows newly wedded couple to know more about traditions and customs in Finland and immerse in Middle Ages time.

Lovely boat cruise

On the third day for honeymoon guests, lovely boat cruise on Lake Saimaa will be organized. As Savonlinna is the pearl of Lake Saimaa and north Venice as Finns call it, it cannot be imagined being in Savonlinna and not taking a boat cruise. This cruise takes one hour and a half and starts at 13.30. During the cruise various attractive landscapes of beautiful nature replace one another. The culmination of the cruise is definitely view of Olavinlinna Castle and from the deck of the ship everybody can admire its elegance and gratefulness.

Russia also can boast its fascinating nature - forests, lakes, rivers and that is why Russians as nation love to be close to nature. For newly wedded couple it will be appealing because crystal pure water with amazing blue hue is always fabulous. Both water and nature around the lakes create a fascinating beauty of the landscape.

A memorable present

When it is time to leave and make check-out, newly married couple will be given a memorable present from the hotel as a token of thankfulness and gratitude for choosing Best Western Spahotel Casino during the most significant and happiest period of their life –honeymoon. It can be caps with inscription ”The best honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino” (appendix 2) or a calendar with picture of Olavinlinna Castle (appendix 3). Employees at the reception desk will tell honeymoon guests several goodbye words: “We tried to do our best for making your honeymoon like unforgettable experience; we hope we could reach this result. We sincerely wish both of you good luck and happiness. Let your way be interesting and light without any troubles”.

Unforgettable photo-shoot

As for a professional photographer, he will work with newly married couple all four days to capture every happy moment of their life. The couple has a right to decide when and where they need a photographer but they should arrange about it beforehand. The hotel offers to have a photographer for the first day when couple just comes to capture their arrival and how the hotel meets them. The second day a photographer can take a photo in Spahotel Casino itself because inside it is really beautiful and of course, in Olavinlinna Castle where medieval and magic atmosphere plays important role.

The third day it is about boat lake cruise where can be made excellent photos with virgin nature. Besides if newly married couple wants, they can order photo shoot in Spa sector. A photographer can take photos in day of departure from moment when receptionist gives a gift till a doorman closes a car and says "we are already waiting for you again". In album will be also included photos with delicious food, saunas and swimming pool, bar and nature from Savonlinna. In a week, honeymoon photographs will be posted from the hotel's address.

As I focused on Russian guests, I tried to take into account main Russian peculiarities as nation and according to them I created a draft of honeymoon product. For Best Western Spahotel Casino, honeymoon product is some kind of innovation. In connection with that, when I had practice there I learnt all working process from within to create an appropriate honeymoon product in accordance with potential of Spahotel Casino.

As for Savonlinna, it is suitable place to have a rest, immerse in peace and quiet and be in harmony with each other due to wonderful nature which this region can boast. Therefore, both amazing town –Savonlinna and comfortable hotel-Best Western Spahotel Casino are great places for spending honeymoon there.

Experience realms in Best Western Spahotel Casino

As for experience engagement, those couples who will get a chance to obtain this honeymoon product will be experience all realms which Pine and Gilmore speak

about in their book “The Experience Economy”- educational, escapist, esthetic, and entertainment. Let’s consider all realms according to the draft of honeymoon product.

To experience educational engagement, it is necessary to be active participant in learning process. Honeymoon guests will be involved in this realm when they will have excursion to Olavinlinna Castle. When a guide tells them new real historic information about the place, newly wedded couple will be like students who will get knowledge at university. Besides, they will be active participants not only because they should listen to and remember a story but because they will be there: they can see, touch and walk along Castle rooms.

Their entertainment engagement manifests in the following: when newly wedded couple comes to Olavinlinna Castle, it can seem to them that they are in the theatre and see a performance. A Middle Ages atmosphere and people who wear medieval costumes will create such feelings. Honeymoon guests are not actors so they cannot be players on stage, but they can be observers and enjoy the performance in front of them.

What about esthetic realm? Sure, newly married couple will experience this realm during their honeymoon as well. For this kind of engagement, it is enough to enjoy something from outside without touching it. Here, in Savonlinna everyone can experience esthetic realm no matter wherever he or she goes. Nature that surrounds this place is unique and amazing, so guests are always immersed in the world of aesthetics.

Moreover, if we are talking about Best Western Spahotel Casino itself, everything inside is beautiful: modern architecture, competent arrangement of every department from reception desk to spa sector, appetizing smell in restaurants. All those things create unbelievable atmosphere which guests can enjoy. According to esthetic realm, guests have no right to touch the environment, they cannot change anything in the hotel, but it does not mean that they cannot get experiences from being observers. Just the opposite, changes are happening inside them. Their deep perception creates strong experiences.

And finally: escapist realm. Newly wedded couple will become aware of escapist engagement at once when their honeymoon starts. As a rule, honeymoon is special time

when everything seems better, more romantic because this period is wrapped with love and tenderness. From the first minutes of staying at Spahotel Casino, the couple will be immersed in fairy-tale atmosphere where they are happy and nothing can destroy their happiness. The sense of reality deadens that allows honeymoon guests enjoy their memorable event much better.

Everyone dreams at least once to be transformed in the fabulous world where always good things are victorious over evil ones, where only caress, love and happiness live. Best Western Spahotel Casino can create such an unbelievable world where there are no problems, worries or stress situations. Employees take care of their guests and try to do their best to satisfy guests' desires.

All these things that were described above can make the hotel be a real place of experience. For modern hotels it will not be so difficult to organize these pleasant things. Employees just need to ask their imagination and use creativity if they want the hotel to be the winner among competitors.

As a rule, guests themselves help them to know about what it is necessary to upgrade or create. Just should not forget that guests, above all, are travelers and they visit different places. Travelling from one destination to another, they compare not only countries and cities but also places where they were staying at for a while. Hence, they form their concept about different hotels' service and can give personnel useful information about both new ideas and situation of their competitors.

There are all hospitality product levels in Best Western Spahotel Casino

As for significance of hospitality product levels about which Kotler says in his classic books. Today, it is pretty clear that those hotels where there are all well-developed levels are more successful than those which offer only the core products (just beds and foods). Due to interview, it can be made a conclusion about hotel guests' preferences. Guests appreciate mostly availability of the augmented product which connected with hotel atmosphere and attitude of staff to guests. No doubts, many people prefer to stay at hotels where there are different services: saunas, gym, shops, variety of restaurants with different cuisines, entertainments. And all these things are included in facilitating product and mostly in supporting one.

In the modern world if businessmen want to achieve their goals and be successful in any sphere, and especially in hospitality one where staging experiences is one of the most significant thing, they should be flexible and direct their activity to satisfy people's desires.

Now it is not enough to take care of their needs, they should see deeply, they should discover, understand and even perceive customers' wishes. According to this, all items of honeymoon product can vary or add one another; it depends on what exactly clients want to get in their honeymoon holiday. Newly wedded couple just should choose those items from the suggested list they really want to take, mostly important to experience.

7 RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

To get reliable information concerning a special research where it is necessary to conduct an interview, a researcher should consider all aspects of the case he is interested in and interview as many respondents as possible at least twice. A period between the first and second interview depends on the kind of the research. Reliability is checked with time. If people have unchanged opinion and answer the same questions like they did in first time, we can talk about reliability of research work. (Reliability & Validity 2014.)

According to my case, I interviewed fifty Russian guests (from 25 till 44 years old) who were staying at Best Western Spahotel Casino from 7th to 10th of March during Russian holidays- Women's Day. Therefore, I questioned and analyzed only one part of this target group and got the outcome based on it and all the rest of parts were left without attention.

Besides, it was impossible to conduct the same interview twice. Firstly, all respondents were tourists and they stayed at hotel just a few days and then left. Secondly, I was restricted with time frame and a period of my work was not enough to implement the interview again. So, I conducted an interview once and asked hotel guests who were just small part of certain target group.

In compliance with this, my research work cannot be called 100% reliable or trustworthy. It requires further collecting information and considering all parts of the target group. That is why my main goal was to create a draft of honeymoon product, not a real product, because those data and facts that I gathered for the research work was not enough and it did not encompass whole Russian population.

As I have already mentioned, for my bachelor thesis I used special method – unstructured interviewing where I asked mostly open questions to respondents. With the help of open questions, I could get detailed answers of each question.

Open questions allow interviewees to express their opinions and share their ideas with a researcher according to the subject they are discussing. In this case the researcher works with concrete points of view and comprehensive respondents' thoughts and that are definitely more useful than "yes/no" answers.

As for my research work, for hotel guests I tried to develop well-defined, workable and understandable questionnaire which could help me to know more about significant options in the hotel today and what hotel experience means in guests' eyes.

Validity of research work means that methods you used help you to achieve your goal (Reliability & Validity 2014). In accordance with this, I can say that my research work was valid because unstructured interviewing allowed me to get necessary answers which were basis in creating a draft of honeymoon product. Thus, it is logical that I took into consideration all guests' answers because a draft of honeymoon product was designed for Russians and it was necessary to take into account their preferences and recommendations.

8 CONCLUSION

Experiences are what exactly give customers an opportunity to judge about products, brands and organizations in general. That is why companies should create experiences which can entertain, engage customers and break their stereotypes. To achieve this

result it is necessary to conceive a business like a show. With the help of such attitude to business, it is easy to attract clients and enter into personal relationship with them.

Business like a show is really effective nowadays. Due to experiences that are created in the business context, entrepreneurs can offer diverse products and multifarious brands and they strengthen connection with consumers.

Those companies who stage experiences do not have competitors because they produce something unique and unusual, something that can people remember for a long time after they were involved in experience realms. Experiences that are based on pleasant impressions create illusion of happiness, give sense of pleasure and allow being close to happy exciting moments that you had in past.

Experiential business gives guests necessary interactive experiences. It entices consumers to learn, enrich themselves, express their emotions and play their own role. People want the companies to surprise them, they want to get such experiences they even do not expect or think about.

As for the draft of honeymoon product which has been developed in this bachelor thesis. As Best Western Spahotel Casino does not have such kind of product, at first employer and managers treated skeptically to my idea. Their opinion was changing in proportion as I was doing my research work and afterwards they were interested in result.

When I analyzed interview results and created a draft of honeymoon product for Russians, I showed final outcome to employees. They told me that it was really interesting to know about Russian preferences because Russians are constant clients in Best Western Spahotel Casino. So, I hope that my work was not just lost time and someday Best Western Spahotel Casino will include this product like additional service and it will be already real honeymoon product, not only its draft.

Due to this bachelor thesis I got professional knowledge and developed for myself significance of staging experiences in any spheres and particularly in hotels where I have already had practice and which I have already chosen for my future job.

To sum up, I would like to say that staging experiences today is essential part of success in business because with the help of them, customers are not just ordinary people; they are actors who play their own performance.

Organizations stage experiences whenever they engage clients, connect with them in a personal and memorable way. The most interesting fact is there are no two persons who can have the same experience period. All experiences are different. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 5-17.)

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The questionnaire for guests in Best Western Spahotel Casino

	Questionnaire
1	What do you know about experience and particularly hotel experience?
2	What do you pay attention in the first place when you settle down in hotel?
3	Would you like to spend your honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino? If not, what is missing in hotel to attract you to come back and celebrate that memorable event?
4	Why do you think it's really good idea for couples to spend their honeymoon in Savonlinna?
5	Why did you choose Best Western Spahotel Casino? What do you like here the most?
6	Are there any disadvantages of hotel while you were staying here? What are they?
7	How long would you like to stay in our hotel for your first couples' holiday?
8	What would you like to experience in your honeymoon in Best Western Spahotel Casino?
9	What would you like the hotel to include in honeymoon package?(your own suggestions)
10	Would you like the professional photographer to take photos or make a video about your honeymoon?

APPENDIX 2.

A memorable gift from Best Western Spahotel Casino –The Cap



APPENDIX 3.

A memorable gift from Best Western Spahotel Casino- The Calendar

